

Message Text

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16

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCA-01 PPT-01 SY-05 OPR-02 CIAE-00

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R 081052Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 974

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR CZ
SUBJECT: TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

1. HEAD OF FOREIGN MINISTRY SIXTH DEPARTMENT ZANTOVSKY CALLED AMBASSADOR IN SEPTEMBER 3 TO DISCUSS PROPOSAL TO TERMINATE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS RECIPROCALLY. HE MADE CLEAR THAT HIS GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD PROPOSAL WAS POSITIVE BUT VIEWED TEXT OF DRAFT NOTE, WHICH EMBASSY PRESENTED IN JANUARY, AS DEFICIENT IN SOME RESPECTS. HE BRIEFLY REVIEWED HISTORY OF TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS STARTING FROM 1963 WHEN DEPARTMENT FIRST NOTIFIED EE EMBASSIES OF RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL OF THEIR PERSONNEL IN THE U.S. HE RECALLED THAT HE HAD BEEN CHARGE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY AT THE TIME AND HAD BEEN CALLED IN BY UNDER SECRETARY U. ALEXIS JOHNSON TO RECEIVE NOTE. HE NOTED THAT CZECHOSLOVAKS HAD SHORTLY THEREAFTER APPEALED TO USG TO RECONSIDER RESTRICTION AND HAD NOT IMPOSED RECIPROCAL RESTRICTIONS ON AMERICAN PERSONNEL UNTIL 1965.

2. ZANTOVSKY PRESENTED DRAFT NOTE (BEING POUCHED TO EUR/EE) WHICH EMPHASIZES THAT CZECHOSLOVAK SIDE HAD BEEN OPPOSED TO RESTRICTIONS FROM BEGINNING. DRAFT FOLLOWS U.S. EXAMPLE BY INCLUDING LANGUAGE RECOGNIZING THAT ENTRY INTO OR STAY IN VICINITY OF CERTAIN AREAS WILL CONTINUE TO BE SUBJECT TO SECURITY RESTRICTIONS. IT ALSO CONTAINS PARAGRAPH NOTING THAT SOLUTION OF RESTRICTED AREA PROBLEMS IS A STEP IMPLEMENTING HELSINKI FINAL ACT, WHICH CAN FACILITATE FURTHER PROMOTIONS OF BILATERAL

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RELATIONS.

3. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION ZANTOVSKY INDICATED THAT HE WAS PRESENTING DRAFT TO PUT FORWARD CZECHOSLOVAK VIEW OF THE HISTORICAL RECORD, BUT THAT HIS SIDE WAS NOT INSISTENT ON USE OF ITS LANGUAGE. HE SUGGESTED WE STUDY MATTER AND SUGGEST NEW LANGUAGE WHICH WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAS CONSISTENTLY FAVORED ENDING RESTRICTIONS, BUT WOULD NOT NECESSARILY DIFFER GREATLY OTHERWISE FROM OUR DRAFT LANGUAGE. HE THOUGHT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT OUR LANGUAGE ON AREAS RESTRICTED FOR NATIONAL SECURITY REASONS COULD STAND.

4. TONE AND THRUST OF DISCUSSION WAS DECIDEDLY POSITIVE. ZANTOVSKY STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WISHED TO MOVE AHEAD QUICKLY ON ISSUE ONCE WE CAME BACK WITH NEW LANGUAGE.

5. WE ARE PRESENTLY PREPARING NEW DRAFT FOR DEPARTMENT'S CONSIDERATION.
BYRNE

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